

Silver linings include virtual concert

By Rodd Cayton

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GALLUP — The **Gallup MainStreet** Arts & Cultural District has found not one but two silver linings in the chaos caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In December, the organization received a \$25,000 grant from the Mortimer & Mimi Levitt Foundation to put on a 10-event free summer concert series. The city government provided a matching grant.

Executive Director Kara Smith said **Gallup MainStreet** was in conversation with artists and agents and was close to finalizing a lineup when the series had to be canceled because of the coronavirus.

The good news: The organization was able to roll the grant over and plan a concert series for 2021.

The other good news: The foundation has put together a national “virtual concert” series for the communities that received the grants, including a **Gallup** performance Thursday by blues-rock musician Levi Platero.

The show, which starts at 5 p.m., will be live streamed from the **Gallup** Downtown Conference Center and will be viewable on the **Gallup MainStreet** Facebook page as well as a Vimeo page found on the Levitt Foundation website. It will not be open for an audience, per state restrictions on large gatherings.

Smith said Platero will perform a solo acoustic set of originals, instead of playing with

a band as is his preference.

“But we’ll have sound hooked up so it comes through loud and clear on the internet,” Smith said.

Fit for entertainment-starved community

She said Platero, of St. Michaels, Arizona, was among the top area artists requested to appear by community members.

Smith said the virtual concerts are a positive for a community that the pandemic has deprived of **Gallup** ArtsCrawl events, live concerts and even trips to the movie theater.

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Levi Platero, of St. Michaels, Arizona, is scheduled to perform a virtual concert at 5 p.m. Thursday from the Downtown Conference Center in **Gallup**. The event will be live streamed online.

Courtesy photo

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“It’s something fun and upbeat,” she said. “It may not be physically bringing people together, but it will be

“We might have to go back to the drawing board because of how much things have changed,” Smith said.

virtually bringing people together.”

Smith said she’s not sure how much work will need to be done in assembling the 2021 roster of artists.

Gallup MainStreet will start with outreach to artists and agents and see whether it can continue with the program it was building.

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